

Resist the Onslaughts Against the Working Class Movement

The year 1981 starts with the crunch, the crunch of capitalist crisis that falls on the working people. The President advises not to resort to strike, the Prime Minister threatens with drastic measures. From Congress (I) to CPI(M) ministers everybody has on his lips the hymn on productivity and law and order, but productivity is down around negative figure, the only law that prevails is the law of savage exploitation and the order is to keep the exploited threaded to this law. Prices of essential commodities leap upward, tax burden mounts, code of civil society is becoming a thing of the past. Yes, these are the surest symptoms of a grave all-out crisis of moribund capitalism. The bourgeoisie seeks its class solution by breaking the resistance of the working class through virtual ban on democratic movement. Should the working class allow worst kind of slavery to be thrust upon them or unite in mighty democratic movement to beat back the bourgeois onslaughts—is the prime question at the moment.

Behind the plea of class harmony

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has been sermonising on the virtue of class harmony and industrial peace since she came back with the promise of a government "that

works". She has kept her words. During one year's rule of her government, industrial growth has touched negative figure, there has been double digit inflation of prices, infrastructural bottleneck of supply of coal, electricity

and wagon movement has set in to the serious detriment of the economy but in one aspect her government has excelled over the performance of the past governments, we mean the measures in passing authoritarian laws like re-introduction of preventive detention, National Security Act, Essential Services Maintenance Act and a host of other such kind through ordinances. They are all meant to reduce the liberty and minimum democratic right of the people to nullity.

In his Republic Day eve speech, the President, Mr. Sanjiva Reddy has called for the cooperation of the opposition party leaders by appealing to them not to encourage industrial unrest and impede production at a

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Historic March of Lovers of Education in West Bengal

On February 2, last the people of Calcutta, the citadel of left and democratic movements witnessed a unique and unforgettable event. Leading intellectuals and thinking public, rising above the prevailing apathy and frustration had come in tens and tens of thousands out into the street to give organised expression of protest against the disastrous language and education policy which the 'Left Front' Government of West Bengal riding rough-shod over the strong opposition by subverting the autonomy of educational institutions had thrust upon the people. On that day, educationists, litterateurs, students, guardians and people from all walks of life came forward in response to the call of Siksha Sankochan Birodhi O Swadhikar Raksha Committee (Committee to Resist Curtailment of Education and Encroachment on Autonomy) which had reached all corners of West Bengal and joined in the historic protest march to press upon the Government the demand for revision of such anti-people policies. They had come defying all obstacles put in their way to thwart this protest movement. Although the date of this protest march to Writers Buildings had been announced well in advance, the Congress (I) choose this very day to intensify sporadic agitations against the enhanced bus and tram fare.

In some colleges students wanting to join the demonstration were forcefully held up and in one instant even attacked by anti-socials backed by the ruling party. But inspite of all these hazards an endless stream of people converged into the College Square in great determination, assembling at the foot of the Vidyasagar statue to

take part in the march. Dr. Sukumar Sen, National Professor of Linguistic sent a note regretting his inability to attend the protest demonstration due to bad health but later could not withstand the desire to be present in person and participated in the protest demonstration inspite of his failing health.

There Dr. Sukumar Sen not only read out the message he had written but even walked at the head of the procession all the way. Dr. Sumkumar Sen said: "There are jeers that I am old and senile. Very true. I am old, but I cannot agree that my intelligence has been touched by old age. Nobody else but a brain distorted by petty party politics will think so. But just in my old age lies my strength. Many of you may accept the Sanskrit Proverb: 'At the time of danger one must take the advice of the old'. There is no doubt that such a time has come. That is why I am telling the education department—take the advice of this old man. Don't abolish English from the primary stage.

At the foot of the statue of the great Vidyasagar who had the courage to make a place for English at the Sanskrit College, you will begin your march to press the demand for retention of English at the primary stage. May your mission succeed".

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Comrade Pritish Chanda Condemns LIC Ordinance

Comrade Pritish Chanda, General Secretary UTUC (Lenin Sarani), and SUCI Leader has issued the following statement against the LIC Ordinance on 3rd February '81.

The latest LIC Ordinance promulgated by the Government of India is another dangerous attack upon the rights of collective bargaining of organised working class. It is against all democratic principle of healthy industrial relations. By seeking to arm the Government with extra-ordinary and extra-legal powers to not only freeze wage but also to reduce existing wage and monetary benefits, the Government has again shown its policy of putting the entire burden of capitalist crisis upon the shoulder of the working class. Without formulating any scientific and rational national wage structure and without taking any effective steps

against inflation, it is nonsense to talk about prevailing high wages in LIC. Has the government shown its willingness to increase very low wages and incomes of workers in other sectors?

We urge upon all trade unions and the working class to take due note of this new attack and to come forward unitedly in joint action in defence of working class rights and interest. We also humbly remind the trade union leaders of all shades the dangerous consequence of practice of economism only and the opportunism of sacrificing other vital social political class rights at the altar of some meagre monetary gains.

Comrade Fatick Ghosh, General Secretary, UTUC (Lenin Sarani), West Bengal, sent the following telegram to the President of India, on 4th February '81. "Strongly Protest Ordinance Rationalising Emoluments on LIC Employees stop Demand Immediate withdrawal Stop."

On movement of Public Sector Employees

Comrade Pritish Chanda, General Secretary, U.T.U.C. (L S), has issued the following statement on 3rd February '81 on the movement of public sector employees:

"The U.T.U.C. (Lenin Sarani) all India Secretariat has in a resolution strongly condemned the adamant attitude of the public sector management and the Government of India in persistently refusing to amicably settle the dispute of public sector employees at Bangalore and Hyderabad

who are on strike for more than a month.

The U.T.U.C. (Lenin Sarani) Secretariat also strongly condemns the repressive policy adopted by the Congress (I) Government of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and also the Central Government.

We urge upon the Government to forsake the anti-working class attitude and to come forward for settlement of the disputes on reasonable and honourable terms".

CPI(M)'s collaborationist policy helps bourgeois design to the peril of working class movement

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time when the country was faced with many difficult problems. The President said. "In the present inflationary situation, it is the duty of every political party and every citizen to cooperate in discouraging strikes and agitation to keep up production in all vital spheres." The President then in a show of sympathy for the poor, repeats the oft-repeated plea that: "It is the poorest that are hit the hardest by economic disruption since shortages inevitably lead to high prices causing wide spread privation".

The President's solicitude would have been real had he spelt out the truth, the whole truth about the real causes of disruption and shortages in the vital sectors of the economy where there has for long been no strike or agitation by the workers. He would have spared himself from cutting a cruel joke on the poor people had he uttered point blank how the blackmarketeers and speculators are minting speculative profit at the cost of unspeakable miseries of the poor people by creating artificial scarcity while the administration, the law keeping machinery are aiding and assisting the economic offenders and social criminals. He might have taken pains to see for himself whether for workers strikes or agitations there has been the steady slump in productivity or the fact is otherway round. He might have questioned even the very recent imposition of government duty on a poorman's daily consumption article like kerosene to raise further its price. Well, he might have done all this, had he not been the president of Indian Republic! Speaking plain truth is perhaps not in the rule of the game—the game of bourgeois parliamentary politics. And here he is in happy company with the leaders of all the parliamentary opposition

parties including CPI(M) who have set before them the sole task of defending and safeguarding like him the 'productivity' of super profits of the capitalist exploitation and the 'order' for submission of the exploited to this capitalist law. What for therefore the President exhorts these leaders to see that organised movements of the working class do not disturb the interest of the ruling capitalist class now in dire crisis. Is he not aware that in West Bengal where a CPI(M) led ministry rule earns the praise and plaudits of the monopoly houses who were all up in arms during the UF ministry of 1967 when because of the labour policy pursued by Comrade Subodh Banerjee of our party there was an upsurge of working class movement in the state?

Not that Mr. Reddy is unaware of this reality, otherwise he could not have, not too long ago, advocated for a national coalition government at the Centre taking parties like CPI(M) in it as partners. He is surely aware about the 'national concord' among these parliamentary parties about the bourgeois design at this hour of grave crisis and therefore only asks of these parties to implement this accord in real terms, notwithstanding mutual clash of interests and contentions among them in bourgeois parliamentary politics. Be that as it may, let us recount in brief the authoritarian measures and steps that have been taken briskly over the foregoing years all having one common object of containing organised mass movement.

LIC Ordinance its implication

Close on the heels of the President's exhortation and appeal to 'organised labour' for cooperation has come the LIC Ordinance which is a dangerous portent to trade union movement as

such. The Central Government, by virtue of this Ordinance assumed powers to "streamline" the wage structure and 'revise' the service conditions of LIC employees with retrospective effect from June 30, 1979.

An impression is sought to be made in the Press as also in certain trade union circles that the Ordinance is calculated to circumvent the recent Supreme Court judgment which has enjoined on the government to pay LIC employees a 15 P.C. bonus for 1978-79 and 1979-80 with 12 P.C interest. The government suspended the bonus agreement entered with the employees in 1974, on the plea of it being at variance with government norms after actually making bonus payment for two years. The employees (led by CPI controlled union) successfully challenged this violation of agreement in the Allahabad High Court. The government's appeal to this judgment in the Supreme Court was rejected by majority verdict. The government was still dragging its feet in giving effect to the Supreme Court's verdict. It made further appeal to the court whereupon the union filed a contempt petition. The Attorney General made a solemn declaration before the Supreme Court that the government would honour the court's judgment by April, this year. Now comes this Ordinance, to honour whom is the question. By this Ordinance, the government declares that bonus will be paid but not in terms of the court's verdict. It will be subject to a ceiling of Rs. 750 and to those drawing up to Rs. 1600 a month. Not only this, the government forecloses the negotiations pending for long over the employee's charter of demands by deciding to pay dearness allowance to the class III and class IV employees at the rate of 3% on the

basic pay subject to a ceiling of Rs 15.80 for every four point rise in the cost of living index.

The dangerous implication of this step is therefore not confined simply within negation of legal obligation of the government decided by the highest court on the land but is surely far more. It slashes down the existing economic gains and rights of the employees of a nationalised institution. It denies brazenly the right of collective bargaining and imposes on the employees a retrograde wage principle in line with the recommendations of the notorious Boothalingam Committee. In the matter of denial of the fundamental right of a trade union body to collective bargaining or in the reverse, in imposing set terms and conditions on the employees, the government, step by step, has reached a point beyond which larks the possibility of total wage freeze. During the Janata regime, the Bureau of Public Enterprise (BPE) was set up which set down the parameter within which wage settlement was asked to be made. This was put to effect in the Banking industry and elsewhere. Now, the government moves a step further by negating even the show of collective bargaining by dictating the terms and conditions through ordinance. In the case of General Insurance employees, their charter was similarly decided unilaterally by government through announcement of the revision by Gazette publication. The trend is therefore surely to the burial of trade union rights and movements.

Herein lies the real import of the danger confronting the trade union movement. And it has not come overnight. The governments run by both Janata and Congress (I) could not proceed to this extent with ease but for the tacit support and help of so-called big trade union bodies under the control

of both old and neo-social democrats. Fact is that when the Janata and the present Indira Governments were bringing down all the anti-labour undemocratic authoritarian measures like the "Parameter" set down by the Bureau of Public Enterprise negating the very right of collective bargaining it was UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and its leader Comrade Prithish Chanda, the General Secretary, had to fight alone vigorously within the government's Committee. Comrade Chanda again and again appealed to big trade union centres particularly the CPI(M) led CITU to come forward for a united defence but each time CPI(M) leaders evaded the question of united struggle on some plea or other.

Not that they were unaware of the dangerous class policy being pursued by the governments at this hour of intense general crisis. But they were helping this class policy through tricky manoeuvres. On the one hand they were obstructing a united resistance of the working class. On the other hand from the government they are running, are trying to kill the very spirit of combatibility through legalism-reformism. Like the Congress leaders, their Chief Ministers are also harping on the virtue of productivity and exhorting the workers to raise it, as if the workers are responsible for the fall in productivity. Not only this, they are bringing down police brutalities on working class movement. Instead of preparing the working class for a determined fight against bourgeois attacks, they have been doing everything to emasculate it. This is their worst kind of treachery to the cause of the working class.

It is the well known lesson of history that for the crime of social democracy, the entire working

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Ordinance On Black Money—A Black Deal?

The Special Bearer bond ordinance that has been promulgated recently by the President of the country is an attempt on the part of the government to encourage the black-money holders, speculators and dishonest business men to legitimise their ill-gotten gains that they earn at the cost of people's unspeakable sufferings.

That such a step would encourage the accumulation of black money was observed by the Union finance minister himself "Who the other day stated that legitimization of black money may encourage people to resort to more and more accumulation of black money". But just a couple of days after we have witnessed that such respectability has been conferred on the black money and the dishonest businessmen and speculators can be bestowed with this blessing by simply converting their black money into anonymous bearer bonds of a duration of ten years.

For obvious reasons the said ordinance has been sharply criticised by many some of whom termed it to be an amnesty for crimes, a premium on dishonesty.

In a statement issued to the press Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, the General Secretary of our party has also strongly condemned this step of the government and demanded its immediate withdrawal and also to take stringent measures against the black money holders and operators and urged upon the people to build up strong democratic movement in support of this demand.

Such a movement must have to be built up immediately because with days passing with the growth of intense crisis within country's capitalist economy coupled with increasing practices of corruption, more and more black money is extending its evil effects and tentacles over the socio economic life of the people.

Some economists claim that the basic reason for the intensive growth of black money in our country is the prohibitive

tax burden on higher slabs of income, the shortages prevailing in the economy and the inefficient operation of price control policies. At the same time there has been no appreciation of the demand for exempting savings from the tax net.

We hold a different view. First, the genesis of black money has nothing to do with tax burden on higher slabs of income and savings. Rather we think that there must be heavy taxation on higher slabs of incomes and higher savings with effective means for its full realisation. Fact is that direct tax as percentage of total tax revenue has steadily dwindled to its present ratio of only 20 p.c. Who does not know that the industrialists not only shift the burden of indirect tax on common people which is now 80 p.c. and increases their profits rather using it as a plea?

And regarding the others we like to state that it is neither the chronic shortage in the economy nor the inefficient price control policy that gives birth to black money in the society rather these provide opportunity to the black money holders to increase their ill-gotten wealth.

In fact, the basic and primary cause for the generation of black money lies in the present day crisis ridden capitalist economy.

The decline of industrial and economic growth coupled with the growing instability of the crisis-ridden capitalist economy, generates the tendency of bureaucratisation of capital.

The bulk of this bureaucratic capital of course does not remain idle but seeks some underhand

or 'black' means to penetrate into the country's economic life.

A portion enters into the main stream of financial transaction thereby adding further inflation and a large sum is utilised in speculative business. This apart, in fact such a large amount of this capital gets into country's economic transactions through underhand deals that today it is by and large an accepted fact that there now runs in the country, a parallel economy, a 'black economy' so to say, financed by black money.

In the present third general world-wide crisis of capitalism the problem of black money is a growing feature of the capitalist-imperialist world including even the advanced capitalist countries like Great Britain, and USA. An IMF study published in 1910 has gathered expert opinions testifying the phenomenon of wide prevalence of black money in developed and relatively less developed capitalist countries ranging from 7.5% of the GNP in Britain to 33.5% in the USA. India's position in the black money league is not at all insignificant. Because according to the Wanchoo Committee report it was somewhere around 10% of the GNP in 1969-70. It is not at all difficult to guess that today, after a decade the figure has risen to a menacing proportion.

Moreover it is always to be remembered that unlike in the UK and USA Indian economy remains greatly unorganised in agriculture where the black money generates no doubt but remains beyond calculation.

Facts reveal that in our country, the black money apart from spreading its evil tentacles over the country's economy is more and more penetrating into and thereby corroding the political life of the country.

It may not be the travesty of truth if one claims that black money

has become the central point of the present day election oriented, parliamentary politics as the game is played today.

The 'election-all' bourgeois and social democratic parties whose sole object is to anyhow secure seats in the legislature, feel no moral qualms to take recourse to any unfair means for realising their narrow object. Businessmen, and monopoly houses spend crores of rupees to keep these parties which are destined to serve their class interest in the governmental power. Money bag therefore plays an important role in ballot box victories of these parties. And it is within anybody's guess that this whole resources is provided by black money. So it will not at all be overstating of the fact if one observes that all these people have transformed the parliamentary politics into 'black' politics, so to say.

And this makes clear why not only the bourgeois parties like the Congress (I), Congress (U) or Janata or BJP but the pseudo left parties like the CPI and CPI(M) too are not serious against black money other than verbal protests.

Now let us try to reflect on what is supposed to be the underlying reasons for the said Ordinance on black money. The Ordinance giving statutory recognition to black money, in its preamble has stated that "black money" has become a serious threat to national economy".

But since practically all quarters are of the opinion that the scheme is unlikely to be effective against this threat some other reason must therefore be sought for its promulgation. One view is that it is the desire to raise resources for meeting budgetary deficits that has prompted the government to take the step. This view may find some ground in the preamble which speaks of "channeliz-

ing black money to productive purposes".

But if this be the sole reason for the promulgation of the ordinance then it is bound to be a futile exercise for various reasons. First the black money operators are minting fabulous super profits with the direct aid and assistance of the governments and the bureaucracy and can therefore hardly be expected to respond.

These people run a parallel black economy which is more profitable and efficient than the legitimate white one. It therefore stands to reason that most of the assets of the black money holders are in the forms not easily convertible into cash and so not readily available for investment in bearer bonds. So even if anyone for reasons of safety desires to invest in bearer bond there will not be much idle cash or liquid money available to do so.

There may however be one exception in case of those resources which are generally utilised for underhand cash payment, for example, in the arena of black politics or black economy or in the other similar business transactions. The risk associated in keeping hard cash can be vastly reduced by keeping it in the form of bearer bonds. When the payment is to be made, the bonds can be encashed by sale and money can be immediately had for meeting the desired expenses.

But still none is optimistic regarding the response to the Ordinance.

Knowledgeable circles believe that the government would be lucky if it gets even Rs. 100 crores whereas the estimated budgetary deficit is Rs. 2700 crores despite the fact that the government has taken a most unethical and immoral step to attract the anti-social black money holders, the dishonest businessmen and specula-

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A portion of the mammoth procession in Calcutta on 2nd February

HISTORIC MARCH

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Exactly at 4 o'clock the gigantic protest march started from College square led by eminent personalities including Dr. Sukumar Sen, Sri Pramatha Nath Bisi, Sri Sankar Prasad Mitra, Dr. Niharranjan Roy, Sri Manoj Basu, Smt. Bani Roy, Dr. Arabinda Bose, Sri Dwijendralal Sengupta, Comrade Manik Mukhopadhyay, Dr. Shyamaprosad Bandhyopadhyay, Dr. B. N. Dasgupta, Sri Sailesh De, Prof. Subir Basu Roy, and others. The large white banner of the Committee at the front, the tastefully decorated and disciplined procession moved ahead, holding aloft the white festoons and banners demanding retention of English at the primary stage. As the processionists moved on, the entire College street and beyond were gradually transformed into an endless, flowing sea of white, the beginning and end far beyond sight. Countless eager people lined both sides of the streets gazing in wonder and admiration

at this unprecedented sight. Many people spontaneously joined the procession and walked along.

Around Esplanade East where the police had been posted to stop the procession pavements and streets were overflowing with people who had gathered beforehand in great expectation craning their necks to get a view of the approaching great historic procession, and hear the leading Committee members address the huge gathering. Comrade Manik Mukhopadhyay was the first to address the people on behalf of the Committee: "This Historic Protest March has no parallel in Calcutta, the city of movements" he said congratulating the people for their active participation. This protest demonstration he said, was a part of the protest movement throughout West Bengal launched by the Siksha Sankochan Birodhi O Swadhikar Raksha Committee under whose banner people irrespective of creed and

belief have united on the crying need to resist the implementation of the disastrous language and education policy on the basis of a common agreed programme of movement. And if the Government does not revise its stand in the meantime the Committee has resolved to further mobilise the resistance of the thinking public and create pressure on the Government through weeklong programme of continuous civil disobedience from 16 February onwards with each day for different sections of people. After this if the Government still remained adamant the Committee would lead the protest movement to a still higher phase, Comrade Manik Mukhopadhyay declared.

Sri Shankar Prasad Mitra, the ex-Chief Justice said: "The Government is becoming more and more efficient in pronouncing untruths and distortions. We never spoke against our mother-tongue. We have raised the demand for retention of English at the primary stage simultaneously with the demand that the mother tongue should be the

medium of instruction upto the higher level. Psychologists too, tell that early childhood is the best time for learning language."

Sri Pramatha Nath Bisi, noted writer, drew the attention to the fact that English is the mother-tongue of the Anglo Indian community in our country, however small their number, and also the state languages of Nagaland and Mizoram. "Therefore English is not a foreign language any more but an Indian language" he said.

Sri Sailesh De, the noted writer, regretted that the Government stooped so low as to take recourse to invectives against intellectuals opposed to their language policy and distorting their stand. "This being their style of speech" he said, "I regret to think to what miserable standard Bangali language if left in the hands of the Government will fall."

Sri Dwijendralal Sengupta stressed, the workers and peasants being the most deprived section of society,

their children need to be taught English in order to be given a better scope in life but the Government on the contrary has even further restricted opportunities for them.

Smt. Bani Roy, a noted writer, said; "Those who deprive the people of literature in the language course are enemies of the country".

"In our student life we had come out in the streets in protest against the policies of the foreign exploiting rulers. I never expected that we have to do the same after independence," said Dr. Arabinda Basu, "But because of the Government's language policy we have to come out in protest into the streets". He recalled that Hitler rose to power turning Germany into a crematorium and desolate ruin. "After the war we saw the youth accusing the then intellectuals full of hate, 'What have you been doing, where was your concern for humanity' In the present circumstances if now we don't come out in protest then the future

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Black Money

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tors. Apart from the fact that it encourages tax evasion and is unfair to honest tax payers black money invested in bonds is exempt from wealth tax, gift tax and capital gains tax whereas those who have declared all their wealth and income will be subject to these taxes. This may remind the dictum "taxation and equity are strangers to each other", perhaps the biggest attraction of the bond lies in its anonymity thereby providing a parallel currency that is even safer than loose cash as it is immune from taxation. Moreover it is available as collateral for borrowing from banks.

So one can rightfully claim that as a bid to crush the roots of the parallel black economy that creates and is in its own sustained by black money, the ordinance fails even to scratch the surface. Such schemes in reality can only help periodical laundering of black money into white with full official blessings thereby further encouraging more and more accumulation of black money.

It is a fact that black money, an evil generated and sustained by the

present deep crisis-ridden capitalism cannot be completely eradicated from the society, so long capitalism remains.

But still, if a government genuinely desires then it can take certain steps and measures to arrest its increasing growth within the country, it can do a lot of thing.

It is only by taking stringent measures and plugging the loopholes that the black money holders take advantage of that the government can hope to make a dent in the citadel of black money. Regarding these measures, we like to draw attention particularly to two things.

First, if a government genuinely desires, then it can with the best effort track black money, dehoard it and take serious penal measures against the anti-social black money holders who fatten on their ill gotten wealth at the cost of the people.

Secondly, we know that the black money holders invest a large sum of their ill-gotten wealth in the business of foodgrains and other essential commodities. And it is this sort of investment that is mainly responsible for the prevailing racketeering in the busi-

ness of essential goods causing much misery and sufferings to the common people.

The way out is to ban private trade in foodgrain and other essential commodities and introduce in its place, all-out state trading, both wholesale and retail. This would help to curb black money and provide some relief to the people as well.

This is a step quite in conformity with the anti-people character of a government which since its assumption into office is taking one after another anti-people steps and measures like Preventive Detention Act, National Security Act etc. etc.

It is a government that rewards the economic offenders and social criminals but brings draconian measures for the people who are victim of these criminal politics.

It is only the mighty democratic movement of the people that can force it to take such steps. We urge upon the people to build up such a movement within the country.

Police brutalities on students' movement in Orissa

Below we give the photographs of leading DSO organisers and All Orissa Students' Action Committee who were savagely beaten by police on 19th December, last year when at the call of Action Committee

thousands of students demonstrated before the Revenue Divisional Commissioners (RDC's) to press for the demands. Apart from these leaders hundreds others including students were severely injured.



Kalidash Mishra
Joint Convenor, Students'
Action Committee



Dhruba Chandra Das
Organiser DSO
Bhadrak College



Narendra Panigrahi
Leading Organiser of DSO
and student leader
M. S Law College

Jagannath Verm addressed the gathering. The above programmes have given rise to great enthusiasm among the people.



Shyam Sundar Sewaim
Secretary, Baleswar District
Committee and a leading
organiser of state council



Dharendra Panda
DSO Organiser, Cuttack
Ravanshaw College



Bhaktamadhu Vidyabithi
School Student, Cuttack

Protest meeting and deputation at Jaunpur

On 5th, January last, the Jaunpur (U.P.) Committee of our party, the SUCI, observed "Protest Day" against the brutality and suppression by the police and government of Orissa on the occasion of the last "Orissa Bandh" organised by the AIDSO in that state. On that day, a big procession was organised by our Jaunpur Committee. On the same day, the lawyers of Jaunpur observed a programme of "Jana Jagaran" and organised a demonstration to protest against the barbarous police attack against the lawyers at Varanasi. The two processions merged, and marched through the city and then converged into the Azad Park Maidan where a meeting was held.

Comrade Dinesh Kant Dubey Advocate, re-

presenting Jaunpur District Committee of our party was the main speaker.

In his speech, Comrade Dubey explained the grave danger on democratic rights and liberties posed by the ruling parties in the states and Centre because of their desperate attempt to defend crisis-ridden capitalism. He called upon the people to come forward in defence of basic democratic rights and liberties.

Comrade Jagdish Chand Asthana, District Secretary, Jaunpur was in the chair. Comrades Sreepal Dubey, and Jagannath Varma, Secretary DSO, UP also spoke.

From the meeting a 5 member delegation composed of Comrades Jagdish Chand Asthana, Dinesh Kant Dubey, Shyam Behari Sinha, Sreepal Dubey and

Hiralal Maurya went to meet the DM and press for 12 point demands through a memorandum.

On 16th January, the Jaunpur Committee of our party observed programme in support of people's demands seeking redress for the burning problems in their lives. 144 Cr. P.C. was in force. The authorities created various obstacles including prohibition of use of loud speaker. But defying all these, the programme was a complete success. A large procession led by members of the district committee went through the thoroughfares of Jaunpur and ended up in a mass meeting before the D.M.'s office. Comrade Asthana presided. Comrades Dinesh Kant Dubey, Sreepal Dubey, Ram Kunwar Singh and

Crisis-ridden moribund capitalism tries to pass the entire burden on working class with the help of social democracy

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class movement of a country is to pay very dearly and that exactly is the situation in our country. Social democracy paved the smooth way for crisis-ridden bourgeoisie to mount its monstrous attacks, now being brought down on the working class. Let us recount in short, the preparation of the bourgeois class, step by step, as against the deliberate attempts of the most vicious amongst the neo-social democratic forces to frustrate the repeated attempts to build up united resistance movement of the working class.

The Indira Government has struck heavy blows on trade union movement. The Essential Services Maintenance Act empowers both the Central and State Governments to declare any industry and service essential and as such call any strike or movement illegal attracting most stringent punishment. Even refusal of the employees to work overtime, contribution to funds as also support given in any form to the fighting employees will be liable to a punishment of six months detention or fine upto Rs. 2000 or both. Similarly the National Security Act enjoins rigorous punishment and detention if the government holds anyone guilty of causing 'disruption' or 'dislocation' in the production and distribution of services. What remains after all these draconian measures as legal trade union rights and movements is anybody's guess.

But what has been the reaction of CPI(M) and CITU, its trade union wing? Did they move further than completing the formality of paper statements? No. Rather when UTUC (Lenin Sarani) appealed again and again to them for building up a united movement in defence of the fundamental rights of the working class, they not only did

not respond positively but did everything to frustrate any such move. Today, even the leaderships of some of the central trade unions have come out openly to squarely accuse the CITU leadership of deliberately sabotaging the united struggle by its stubborn refusal to go with SUCI or UTUC (Lenin Sarani) in any united move although it shows eagerness to move unitedly with the INTUC wing of the ruling Congress (I)! Let the serious among the followers of CPI(M) or CITU deeply ponder over the shameless class collaborationist line, their leaders are following to the serious detriment of united working class movement when it is under gravest of attack. While the leaders of that party or its trade union wing show their eagerness to move unitedly with the trade union wing of Congress(I), the ruling party at the Centre that is bringing down all the authoritarian measures, they are stubbornly opposing any united move with SUCI or UTUC (Lenin Sarani) because of the consistent and principled opposition to collaborationist policy that our party or UTUC (Lenin Sarani) is giving, can this leadership of their party or trade union wing lead them to an effective defence against the foul attacks that are coming? It's high time for an unbiased appraisal of the developments for them.

Space will not permit us otherwise we could have shown case by case both within the governments' forum or outside in joint movements where CPI(M) was forced to come, how they collaborated with the Central Government or the management in utter betrayal to the cause of the working people, be it the jute workers' strikes in 1978 or 1980, the Dock Workers' movement, the Bata Mazdoor's strike, Coal Washeries Workers'

or Engineering Workers' movements, or their disruptionist role in the Railways, Port, Bank, Insurance and other industries as also their tacit and even at times open support to Central governments' various designs.

Series of measures to restrict trade union movement

Banking upon this tacit support and approval of the social democratic leaderships both old and new, the Indira Gandhi Government lost no time to bring restrictions one after another on the trade union rights and movements.

The Statesman reports in its January 14, '81 issue that the Minister for Labour and Planning, Mr. N. D. Tiwari said in his press briefing that the Centre was preparing a wage policy statement which would cover such matters as the level of minimum wages, mechanism of wage fixation, collective bargaining and the linkage of wage with productivity. Mr. Tiwari said that the statement would be finalised in consultation with the representatives of the employers and workers.

Asked about the Boothalingam Committee report on wages and prices Mr. Tiwari said that there ought to be a measure of agreement between workers and employers (meaning their representatives—writer) on any such policy. The minister, however admitted that Boothalingam report was before the government. He also informed that informal consultations were being held with the trade unions to arrive at a consensus on these questions. By trade union bodies, of course, he meant a 'club of five' (INTUC, HMS, AITUC, CITU & BMS) which like the 'Apex Three' during the Emergency, the government now proposes to set up to carry through its scheme in the labour front. The story of excluding

UTUC (Lenin Sarani) to oblige this 'club' is a long one and is aimed at eliminating the lone voice of protest against the bourgeois design.

However, the government finds no difficulty from this club of five, in the matter of carrying out its scheme. That is why as far back as in September, last year, the standing labour committee composed of all the state labour ministers at its meeting on 16th September decided to make a provision in the law to enable the Centre or any State Government to intervene effectively, in an industrial dispute to maintain industrial peace.

"Under this provision, the ministers felt that the Centre or a State Government could either prohibit strikes or lockouts or require any industrial establishment or undertaking not to close or remain closed or stop production. The Centre or State Government will under this provision also be able to impose any terms and conditions on employer, employee or both conducive to industrial peace"—(Economic Times September 17, 1980. Italics added).

Now, the deception is transparent. First, although a sham show of equality between the employers and workers has been tried to be kept up, it is far from that, for, the workers being the weaker side in this class divided capitalist society are to resort to strike when they have no other constitutional means to defend their rights and this too as a last resort and for which they suffer financially. It is therefore not a luxury nor a pastime for them. Whereas the employers resort to lockout, closure more often than not either as punitive measure against the workers or as a tricky manoeuvre to avoid financial obligation and stop production. Both are not therefore the same.

Secondly, similar ruse was tried during or prior to Emergency when the employers got rid of their obligations to obtain prior intimation or approval of the government by invoking their constitutional 'freedom of trade' before the Supreme Court. So, this time also, restrictions will be on the workers' rights and their freedom of trade union movement and not on the capitalists.

It was also decided at the said state labour ministers' conference that strike or lockout in an industrial establishment whether public utility or not should be preceded by *bi-partite negotiations between the workmen and employers for a specified period. Strike ballot should be supported by two third majority of the union membership and there should be a provision of 14 days notice of the intention to go on strike.*

It requires not much discussion to show that this is a carbon copy of similar provision in the black bill on industrial relations mooted by the Janata Government and scornfully rejected by the working people. But thanks to the mutual co-operation, both the Congress (I) Government at the Centre and the CPI(M) led 'Left Front' Government in West Bengal are implementing this hated provision under different garbs although this is a provision that will, beside allowing the employers to make all kinds of preparations against workers' movement, make the strike virtually impossible by the rider of two-third majority. The black bill spelt out as the agency for conducting the strike ballot, a government officer, the Registrar of Trade Unions but the present one is silent, perhaps to make it known later. But in the meantime, a sub-committee of the Standing Committee of Labour Ministers under the chairmanship of the

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Central Minister of State for Labour, has made 14 day notice as also strike ballot obligatory. The 'Left Front' Government in West Bengal too in the name of giving the government employees the right to strike, has brought in fact, far more vigorous restrictions on their right to movement. Both Congress(I) and CPI(M) try to cover up these severe restrictions on trade union movement are talking about some reforms on some old acts. It is obvious therefore that both the parties Congress(I) and CPI(M) are collaborating for bringing industrial truce without formal announcement by forcing the trade unions to move within severe restrictions so as to make militant trade union movement a thing of the past. As defenders of moribund capitalism which is in deep crisis these parties of establishment are keeping the exploited tame to the ever-mounting onslaughts of crisis-ridden ruling class. They are doing it by double means. From within the movement, they are polluting the working class with all sorts of opportunism, economism, unethical conducts, illusion of legalism-reformism to disarm it ideologically politically against bourgeois offensives. They are discouraging in every possible way working class movement but when despite their opposition movements grow up either spontaneously or at our initiative they do not feel slightest hesitation to bring down brutal police repression. And the movements they at times are to initiate are inevitably led astray.

Even in case of granting minimum relief to the workers CPI(M) guided ministries are shamelessly shielding the industrialists. The workers retrenched during Emergency have not got back their jobs, the extra work load imposed on them during the same period in jute and other industries has not yet been withdrawn although workers have been fighting for long.

Stand up and Resist the Bourgeois Offensive

They are concealing the fact that the cause of crisis is not for working class movement but lies in the very system itself. Let us take up that all important point which lays bare the lie daily dinned in the ears of the toiling people by these parties of the establishment to deceive them.

Crisis in the economy—the real cause

Going straight to the question as to whether it is workers' strike or agitation that is the cause of declining trend in production resulting in scarcity, shortage of commodities and consequent inflationary spiral or it is the falling rate of production, scarcity and shortages coupled with high rate of inflation as also the high rate of taxation both by state and Central governments that compel the toiling people to demand for higher wages just to make their both ends meet. Let us quote some facts collected from the government's statistics.

In the first nine months of 1980 less than 10 million mandays were lost against nearly 38 million lost during the same period of 1979 according to the latest Labour Ministry figure. At this rate, 1980 may end up with no more than around 13 million lost mandays compared to 45 million in 1979, 28 million in 1978 and 13 million in 1976, the second year of Emergency. It is to be noted however that loss of mandays is not due entirely to worker's strike or agitation as is sought to be suggested by the bourgeoisie and its stooges. In majority of the cases, mandays loss is due to lock-out and closure, particularly at this stage of moribund capitalism when despite plenty of government concessions 'sickness' of industry is widely spreading. Moreover fact shows that in 1976, the year of Emergency when strike and agitation was totally banned 13 million mandays were lost out of which according to government's own admission

more than 86 P.C. was due to lock-out and closure.

So, to resume the thread, there was less loss of mandays year but was there any increase in production and fall in price level? What do the facts say? Just the reverse. According to government's own estimate, published, the average index of industrial production during the first seven months (January-July) dropped 1.7 P.C. below the corresponding level of 1979. This is more than the fall in industrial output during the whole of 1979.

As for price situation, it is not only alarming but is steadily going out of control. Fact is that during the second half of the year, ended September 1980, prices rose 2.4 times as fast as in the first half. The six month period between April-September '80 has been amongst the worst in recent memory as far as prices are concerned with sugar prices raised by 75 P.C., fertilisers by 62 P.C. and pulses by 33 P.C. according to government statistics. The government claims that price rise has 'stabilised'. What does it mean? According to government's wholesale price index figure it rose by 16.5% during the year ended November 1980 which was preceded by a similar rate of increase.

Now, does worker's strike or agitation come anywhere in the picture? Does production fall because there is fall even in government's subsidies to the capitalists from public exchequer? Does the profit of the capitalists fall? A government document (The Economic and fundamental classifications of the Central Budget for 1980-81) summarised in the Bombay Weekly Economic and Political weekly (December 20, '80) shows that direct subsidies and subventions to the capitalists from the central budget alone which constituted only 1.7% in 1970-71 reached the high figure of

10% in 1979-80. It is the poor and toiling people who are bearing this ever increasing burden of subsidies to their exploiters. And a Reserve Bank of India study about 421 large companies shows that these companies had to pay less interest rate on loans of nationalised bank and other financial institutions as also less percentage of taxes. And they, after paying higher amount as dividends (Rs. 221 crores against last year's Rs. 192 crores) got their retained profits increased by 56 P.C. that is to say from Rs. 156 crores to Rs. 244 crores. Have the real wages or earnings of the poor and exploited increased? Have tax burdens on them been reduced? The answers are known to all.

Yet the Finance Minister, Mr. Venkataraman was ruefully observing in his speech at the Forum of financial writers in New Delhi, thus:

"I am a little bit puzzled about the way the industrial community has been responding to the various concessions given by the government to reactivate the industrial investment in the economy whatever problems they have faced in the past are being looked into and are being redressed speedily." Thereafter, he mentions plethora of concessions given like tax holiday, variety of exemptions, rebates etc. and makes his position pathetic by observing "...I do not know what exactly comes in the way of the industrial communities coming forward to take advantage of all the incentives and increasing investment".

Placed therefore in such unenviable position, the Prime Minister tries in vain to justify the intolerable inflationary situation as an imported phenomenon in as much as the rise in crude oil is the villain of the piece. But here too she fails to carry conviction. The ministers of her cabinet and officers in charge of coal-power and railways

while bringing charges and countercharges against one another however admit one point that coal-power-railways infrastructural bottleneck has been specially instrumental in frustrating any effort of stabilising supply of coal and consumption articles and this has placed the economy in a veritable mess.

Is this bottleneck due to any international factor or speaks of gross inefficiency of the administration, corroding effect of corruption and utter apathy to public interest? Does it not help the speculators and black-marketeers to further fleece the people? However central point remains: is it because rise in crude oil that there is so much inflation in the country? What does fact speak? Does it help the Prime Minister or debunk her contention? Let us quote a comment on this point from a news magazine: "Crude petroleum which is what is imported accounts for no more than one percent of the weightage in the calculation of the wholesale price index and this has gone up by only 31 P.C. this year (1979-80—writer) as against 57 P.C. last year. On the other hand prices of sugar (with weightage of 7 percent in the index) went up by 55 P.C. this year against 39 P.C. last year. So, the items over which the government can and does exercise control have shot up this year far more than those that lie outside its jurisdiction. The present crisis is therefore man-made."

(The year of the Snail—India Today, January 1-15, '81)

The real reason for slump in industrial production therefore lies elsewhere as facts have proved beyond doubt. It is the low market base due to poor purchasing power of overwhelming majority of population that capital feels shy of investment. And it is due to this factor despite all kinds of incentives, the installed capacity is not fully utilised, about 50% of which on an average goes idle. More

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Resist this Onslaught

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so when high rate of inflation dampens further the market demand. Naturally production is slow-moving and slower is the rate of employment in the fear of lack of demand and consequent cut back in production as also in work force.

Grasping this Indian reality, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our beloved leader has shown long ago again and again that what the country needs urgently for its recovery is abundance in industrial production. This alone can break through the vicious circle of scarcity-price rise-further drop in production and employment-further scarcity. This can be possible not by cutting back the purchasing power and consumption base but by their continuous increase through increased employment. This also calls for modernisation of agriculture to cope up with the increasing need of inputs for the industries. Industry in its turn will have to meet increased need of inputs and implements for agriculture. This is the only scientific path of regeneration left before us which moribund capitalism at its third phase of intense crisis fails to accomplish.

It chooses on the other hand the bankrupt bourgeois path of cutting back wages and incomes of the toiling people in the midst of mounting tax burdens and high rate of inflation like the CDS in the past. It imposes its will with draconian measures as it did by clamping Emergency. But did they succeed on the previous occasion with CDS and Emergency? No. Rather, the Planning Commission and RBI both during the Janata regime admitted in so many words that the line of cutting back wages instead of regenerating the economy further depressed it. But Indira Gandhi's government is not ready to learn lessons from history.

In the name of income-price policy, the government is trying to bring wage freeze unmindful to the basic reality of the country's economy. They may draw analogies from similar experiments made in advanced capitalist countries like the UK or USA. Apart from the question of their workability even there the basic question remains, can our economy be compared to those? In our country, modern industrial sector with 25 years planning exercises behind it employs only 26.5 million workers or a mere 9.7 P.C. of the total workforce. The proportion of wages and salaries in Gross National Product (GNP) this country is hardly about 25 p.c. compared to 69 p.c. in the UK and 67 p.c. in the USA. The agriculture is almost wholly unorganised where more than 80 p.c. population live either below or just on subsistence level. In the name of attacking inflation, to strike down even this limited consumption base will therefore be suicidal for the economy.

So, it is obvious that it is not the strike or work stoppage by the working people that has been responsible for falling productivity as the President, Prime Minister down to the Chief Ministers would have the people believe. It is seen on the other hand, thousands of crores of rupees are being extracted from the people through taxes by the governments both at the Centre and in the states to feed the industrial as also rural capital. Common people are thus ground down by intolerable burden of capitalist exploitation. They try to rise. Being unable to solve the crisis of moribund capitalism which goes on fouler and fouler, the governments subserving the crisis ridden bourgeoisie threaten with coercion of state apparatus which is the only

Historic March

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generation of students shall accuse us with the same hatred".

means to them to fall back upon.

Home Minister, Jai Singh says: 'With a rise in prices, scarcity of essential commodities, demand for better wages by firm and factory workers etc. law and order problem is bound to get accentuated'. Well then, demanding human condition for existence by the exploited becomes a law and order question to Jai Singh and why to him alone to all those who stand in defence of this most unjust order. Is it an offence then if the exploited toiling millions stand in resistance to systematic loot and plunder? Is it their offence then for bare survival they demand higher wages or incomes in the midst of sky-rocketing prices of essential commodities? Will it be their offence if they refuse to pay hard-earned money to raise the profits of the capitalists who thrive on hundreds of crores of government subsidies? The Home Minister says, 'law and order problem accentuates' when people demand justice but law and order is not affected slightest even when millions upon millions common people are bled white by the capitalists and tax-hunting government. Rather the government stands four square in defence of looters and social criminals. Even the authoritarian measures are not enough, there is definite attempt to muzzle the press and judiciary and even the talk of change in the form of government is very much there.

Is it not the time to decide? Will the people again be the victim of circumstances or they will prove their worth to intervene effectively when there is yet time to defend their democratic and inalienable fundamental rights and dignity of manhood. History looks askance.

A booklet containing quotations from great men with relevance to the present language and education issues at stake published by the Siksha Sankochan Birodhi O Swadhikar Raksha Committee were distributed by volunteers and found countless eager buyers. One such quotation shows that the British did not want to commit the same "folly" in India for which they had lost America in having allowed English education. "If the natives required anything in the way of education they must go to England for it". —Marshman's Evidence before the Lords' Committee 1853, Lords' Second Report, 1853. (Attitude of the Company i. e. Court of Directors of East India Company).

The vast masses of people concerned in education who participated in this historic protest march went home with the firm resolve to carry on the movement till their demands were met. Throughout West Bengal the thinking public is becoming increasingly aware of the disastrous consequences which the government's language and education policy if implemented will bring in its wake. We appeal to the Government of West Bengal not to make it a prestige issue but to view it dispassionately and reconsider its decision. At the same time we appeal to all the people to rise to the occasion, give their all out support and actively participate in the coming movement to bring it to a successful culmination.

Victory of Coir Workers of Quilon

The Coir workers of Quilon, organised under our leadership had been conducting movement for redressal of their just and legitimate demands. The CPI and the CPI(M) not only opposed this legitimate movement of the coir workers but even tried to break it. But the workers were undaunted

Red Salute Comrade Anna Reddy

Comrade Anna Reddy, one of the few who came forward to organise the SUCI at Karnatak died suddenly on January, 3 last. Party flag flew half mast in honour of the departed leader Comrade Reddy who was an advocate by profession. Being imbued with the great revolutionary thoughts and teachings of Com. Shiddas Ghosh, our beloved leader, teacher and guide he shouldered the responsibility of building up revolutionary movement in Karnatak with great zeal and enthusiasm. His death is a great loss to our party.

Students' Movement In Bangalore

A protest movement was organized by students in Bangalore against price-rise and increase in bus fares, etc. when on 21.1.81 the police opened fire on the demonstrators killing one student at Chinthamani. Different students' organizations joined in the movement. The Bangalore City Organising Committee of the AIDS in a statement strongly condemned the police atrocity on students in Bangalore and also in Mysore and demanded a judicial inquiry into these police brutalities. It also demanded an exemplary punishment to those responsible for killing and injuring the students, and adequate compensation to the affected families.

and attained victory which created great enthusiasm among the workers as well as among the common people. This victory of the coir workers enhanced the prestige of our party, the SUCI. After this great victory, a massive demonstration followed by a public meeting was organised.

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